



By the Lord Protector.

# A PROCLAMATION

Declaring His Highness pleasure and command for putting in execution the Laws, Statutes and Ordinances made against Jesuits and Priests, and for the speedy Conviction of Popish Recusants. *vid. y<sup>e</sup> ordinance of Lords and Commons 19 Aug. 1643.*



Whereas it hath been found by experience, that notwithstanding the strict and severe Laws made and standing in force against Jesuits and Popish Priests, many of them have presumed to resort into, and remain within this Commonwealth, and the Dominions thereunto belonging, and do with great audacity exercise all Offices of their profession, both saying Masses, and reconciling the People to the Church of Rome, and by consequence seducing them from the true persuasion, which all people ought to have of their duty and obedience to their Governours, and holding Our Self obliged in duty and conscience to use all good means to preserve the people from being corrupted in Religion; Piety and Obedience, to keep them from being infected with Superstitious and Idolatrous opinions in matters of Religion, which cannot be so surely performed as by keeping them from the Ministers and Instruments of that infection, which are the Priests of all sorts, Ordained in foreign Parts, by Authority prohibited by the Laws of this Land, concerning whom therefore, we have thought it fit to publish this open Declaration of Our purpose and intentions, that careful and diligent search be made by all Our Officers and Ministers, and by all others to whom it may appertain, for all Jesuits, Popish Priests and others, having taken Orders by authority derived or pretended to be derived from the See of Rome, and that wheresoever, and whensoever they shall be found, they be apprehended and committed to the Common-Goal of that County where they shall be found, there to remain without Bail or Mainprize, untill by due Course of Law they shall be tryed and proceeded against. And we do hereby give notice to all whom it may concern at their uttermost perills that the Harbourers, Receivers and Maintainers of Jesuits, Popish Priests, and all such others as have received or shall receive Orders, as aforesaid, shall be left to the due and ordinary Course of Law. And we do expect and command, That all Our Judges, Justices of the Peace, and all other Officers and Ministers whatsoever, do put in full and effectual execution the several Laws, Statutes and Ordinances now in force against all and singular the persons aforesaid or intended.



of Popish Recusants, by means whereof the penalties imposed on such persons cannot be levied nor required, which hath been a great Encouragement to many to be seduced and misled to embrace and entertain the dangerous, superstitious and idolatrous Doctrines of Popery; we, by the Advice of Our Council, having taken into Consideration the great Importance and Consequence to the State which such a remissness or connivance may produce, have thought fit to Declare and Command, That the Oath commonly called The Oath of Abjuration, and appointed by an Ordinance of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament to be administered unto any person being of the Age of One and twenty years, shall be by such persons as are therein and thereby Impowered and Authorized to do the same, and the Ordinance concerning the same be hereafter put in full and effectual execution: And because none may pretend ignorance of what they are to do, or how they ought to demean themselves, we have thought fit to express the words of the said Oath, and the Clauses in the said Ordinance relating thereunto, which are as followeth, viz. That all such persons as (being of the Age of Twenty one Years or above) shall refuse to take the Oath hereafter expressed, which any two Justices of the Peace, or the Mayor, Bayliff, or other head-officer of any City or Town Corporate shall have power to administer to any such person or persons, shall forfeit as Papists within this and the former Ordinance, and Seizure and Sequestration of Two third Parts of all their Goods and Estates real and personal, and Sale of such Proportion of their Goods so seized and sequestred shall be made, and their Rents and Estates disposed of in such manner and proportion, and by such persons, as by the said Ordinance of Sequestration is appointed for Papists: The Oath as followeth;

I A. B. do Abjure and Renounce the Pope's Supremacy and Authority over the Catholique Church in general, and over myself in particular; and I do believe that there is not any Transubstantiation in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, or in the Elements of Bread and Wine after Consecration thereof by any person whatsoever; and I do also believe that there is not any Purgatory, and that the Consecrated Host, Crucifixes or Images ought not to be worshipped, neither that any worship is due unto any of them; and I also believe, that Salvation cannot be merited by Works, and all Doctrines in affirmation of the said points I do abjure and renounce, without any Equivocation, Mental Reservation or secret Evasion whatsoever, taking the words by me spoken according to the common and usual meaning of them: So help me God.

And Our further will and Command is, That the persons herewith intrusted do take due Care that the Oath before recited be tendered unto all persons that shall be suspected to be Popishly affected, and that the Names of such as shall refuse to take the said Oath, or being legally required shall neglect to attend accordingly, be certified into Our Court of Exchequer under their Hands and Seals, that so Proceedings be had and made against them and their Estates, according to Law, and to the several Acts of Parliament and Ordinances made in that behalf.

And we do again straitly Charge and Command all and singular Our Justices of the Peace, Mayors, Bayliffs, and all other Our Officers whom it may concern, to minister the same Oath to all such persons, and in all such Cases, as by the Law they are enabled, knowing that the meaning of the Law was not onely to Authorize them to do it when they would, and to forbear it at their pleasure, but to require it at their hands as a necessary duty committed to them, and imposed on them as persons of Chief Trust under Us for the good and safety of the People.

Given at WHITE-HALL the 26<sup>th</sup> of April, 1655.

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